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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": review of gender mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system

Measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly: review of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in response to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 49/4 and General Assembly resolution 60/140, assesses progress made on gender mainstreaming at the national level by Governments. It also provides information on actions taken by entities of the United Nations system to support the efforts of Governments. Particular focus is given to the two thematic issues before the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session. The report does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of activities at the national level but rather provides illustrative examples.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 60/140, requested the Secretary-General to continue to report annually to the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly, with an assessment of progress on gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices, and to recommend further measures to enhance implementation.

2. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-ninth session, adopted resolution 49/4, in which it requested the Secretary-General to report to its fiftieth session on progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, bearing in mind its two thematic issues outlined in its multi-year programme of work.¹

3. The present report is submitted in response to these two resolutions. The report assesses progress made on gender mainstreaming at the national level, on the basis of information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",² and inputs from Member States to update this information.³

4. The analysis of activities carried out by Member States is complemented by examples of how the entities of the United Nations system have supported gender mainstreaming at the national level.⁴ The report concludes with recommendations for further action by Member States and the United Nations system for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session.

II. Gender mainstreaming at the national level

A. Specific policies and action plans on gender mainstreaming

5. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, many countries have developed policies and action plans on gender mainstreaming, some of which include specific timelines and targets. The Women's Plan of Action of Fiji for mainstreaming of women and gender concerns (1998-2008) aims, inter alia, to enhance sectoral commitment to gender mainstreaming; strengthen the enabling environment, including the gender responsiveness of Government processes; engender macroeconomic policies and national budgetary policies and procedures; and strengthen institutional capacity, including in monitoring progress. The Netherlands adopted "Gender mainstreaming: a strategy for quality improvement (2001-2006)" to ensure top-level commitment within departments, develop clear targets, determine responsibility for gender mainstreaming, foster gender expertise and make human and financial resources available for implementation. Similarly, Denmark included clear targets, frameworks and timetables in its five-year action plan for gender mainstreaming (2002-2006).

6. Several Governments⁵ reported on important revisions of initial strategies for gender mainstreaming that further clarified the mandate and built on experiences gained and lessons learned. In Finland, the Act on Equality states that the promotion of gender equality is the task of all Government ministries and that gender mainstreaming must be carried out in the entire State administration. The revised version of the Gender Equality Act of Norway (2002) enhanced the responsibility for gender mainstreaming in public policies. In Austria, the Council of Ministers adopted a third resolution on gender mainstreaming in March 2004 that provided for explicit implementation of gender mainstreaming at the federal level.

7. In Indonesia, the importance of gender mainstreaming was strengthened through the issuance of presidential instruction 9/2000 on gender mainstreaming in national development, which requested all Government agencies at the national and subnational levels to integrate gender perspectives into planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes, projects and activities of the ministries, Government agencies, governors and mayors. In New Zealand, Government departments are required to prepare gender implication statements to the Cabinet Social Development Committee. The second National Plan for Equality of Portugal states that each Ministry has to appoint a Councillor for Equality to be responsible for preparing an annual ministerial gender mainstreaming plan.

8. To support gender mainstreaming in line ministries and other relevant bodies at national level, several countries⁶ developed specific gender mainstreaming policies and action plans for different sector areas, such as trade, science and technology, poverty reduction, agriculture, employment, environment and health. The Department of Trade and Industry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland developed a public service agreement on gender mainstreaming to ensure measurable improvements across a range of indicators in all departments by 2006. Brazil held its first national conference on women policies in July 2004 to prepare guidelines for gender mainstreaming in national policies. The National Institute of Women in Costa Rica developed a plan for rural women that addresses gender mainstreaming in the agricultural sector, including capacity-building exercises for all officials.

9. A policy analysis advisory committee was established by the Republic of Korea in 2002 to enforce the legislated mandatory gender impact analysis by national and local governments. As a result of a voluntary programme, 41 national Government bodies and 16 local governing bodies are currently conducting gender-impact analyses. Canada devised a gender-based analysis policy, which is being used to systematically integrate gender perspective into all policies and programmes. During 2004 and the first half of 2005 some 70 gender analyses were carried out in all 47 policy areas addressed by ministries in Sweden, which are now setting up new objectives and indicators for the Government. In 2004, Kyrgyzstan introduced mandatory gender analysis of all draft laws under preparation. Australia launched a major new initiative to develop and test a gender impact assessment tool in its 2003/2004 budget.

B. Incorporation of gender perspectives into sectoral policies and programmes

10. A large number of countries reported on initiatives taken to incorporate gender perspectives in national sector policies, strategies and programmes. A number of countries⁷ also reported that gender perspectives have been incorporated in development cooperation policies and strategies. The Department for International Development of the United Kingdom appointed a senior gender and rights adviser in January 2004 to ensure that this process is taken forwards effectively.

11. This section provides illustrative examples of mainstreaming gender perspectives into areas of education, health, work and decision-making.

1. Education

12. Many countries integrated gender perspectives into their education policies and programmes.⁸ The Dominican Republic incorporated gender perspectives into its 2003-2012 strategic education development plan. The Ministry of Education of Mexico holds a nationwide contest every year on "Education and the gender perspective: school experiences and didactic proposals", that invites teachers and education personnel to write about their reflections, anecdotes and experiences related to gender equality or problems in implementing gender equality in school life. In 2004 more than 10,000 inputs were received. Ethiopia produced sex disaggregated statistics and indicators at all levels of the education system. Kenya reported that as a result of the Children's Act (2001), which ushered in free primary education, the gender gap in primary education had almost closed (49.9 and 50.1 per cent). Kazakhstan introduced classes on gender equality into higher education, including foundations of gender theory, anthology of gender research and sociology of gender. Indonesia developed and implemented a new model of educational development entitled life skills that targets poor female school dropouts and illiterate girls and women. Liberia established a girls education newsletter, written and edited by girls, to support and disseminate information encouraging all girls to attend and stay in school.

13. Several countries encouraged women to acquire or enhance information and communications technology skills through formal and informal education. A high proportion of girls attended computer classes at the business training centre and computer knowledge centre in Dominica. Finland and Germany supported special projects to develop information and communications technology skills for girls and women, and Germany also supported the promotion of women in information and communications technology jobs. The Ministry of Education in the Netherlands subsidized the participation of girls in primary and secondary schools in information and communications technology competitions, provided advice and offered support in organizing technical courses for girls. Sweden carried out a technical programme aimed at attracting girls to engineering. The Department of Labor in the United States of America carried out a technology programme entitled "Girls' e-mentoring in science, engineering and technology" to provide girls from 13 to 18 years of age with mentoring by connecting them through a listserv and website with professional women in science, engineering and technology professions.⁹

2. Health

14. Almost half of the countries that responded to the questionnaire on the review and appraisal reported on revising, strengthening and amending health-related policies and action plans to include gender perspectives. Iceland set up a committee to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into the work of health-care institutions and health service providers. El Salvador and Ethiopia reported awareness-raising programmes on mainstreaming gender perspectives in health. France introduced a gender-specific approach to pathology, taking into account the specific health needs of men and women. A number of countries focused on integrating gender perspectives into reproductive health. Bahrain adopted a gender mainstreaming strategy in the health sector and set up national oversight committees. The Ministry of Health of Chile issued guidance on gender mainstreaming in health reform policies, prepared by the Ministry and representatives of civil society and academia. Brazil established a gender-sensitive national women's health policy to guarantee women's human rights and reduce maternal mortality.

3. Work

15. An increasing number of Governments¹⁰ took steps to mainstream gender perspectives into economic policies and programmes, including in the labour market. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security in Argentina was mandated to incorporate gender perspectives into the design and implementation of all actions relating to employment and professional and technical guidance. In Chile, the National Office of Women's Affairs developed a strategy for gender mainstreaming in the country's major agricultural business organizations, through the Public-Private Committee on Seasonal Farm Work.

16. Some countries reported on specific gender research and analysis undertaken to assess gender discrimination in the labour market. Research undertaken included an urban survey of gender perspectives on remuneration and the cost of labour in Mexico; a study on women in the underground economy in Spain, with special reference to domestic employees; and development of a handbook based on gender analysis of 39 collective agreements of metal and textile workers in Austria. Analysis by the National Labour Market Board of Sweden on occupational segregation in the Swedish labour market led to a strategy obliging every workplace to incorporate gender perspectives in performance analysis and operations planning. The PRAXIS Centre for Policy Studies of Estonia conducted a survey on wage differences between women and men in 2004.

4. Decision-making

17. Several countries¹¹ adopted specific measures to combat vertical discrimination in the labour market by strengthening women's participation in economic policy and decision-making processes. In Namibia, affirmative action was applied to cooperatives with a substantial number of women requiring at least one woman on their boards. In Uruguay, steps were taken to promote female career officers within the National Police forces and to eliminate discriminatory provisions that prevented them from ascending through the ranks to senior positions. A project entitled "Mixed" was launched in the Netherlands in 2002, inter alia, to develop,

distribute and test instruments and resources that would enable upwards mobility of women.

18. Most countries reported plans of action, programmes and projects to improve women's participation at different levels of decision-making. The Nicaraguan Institute for Women trained senior management in political and business organizations, labour unions, trade associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil servants on gender mainstreaming in decision-making as an indicator of democracy. Denmark introduced an allowance for all members of local government to offset childcare expenses and South Africa organized childcare facilities for all members of parliament. Chile organized seminars for politicians on the importance of a quota system for women.

19. Many countries¹² carried out special studies on the role of women in decision-making and organized workshops and conferences to share lessons learned and good practices. In Azerbaijan, a database of women in leadership positions was established; and Maldives published a directory on women in leadership positions in Government. Armenia organized a meeting on women, gender and local self-governance. Switzerland began work with media to improve the public perception of women leaders. The United States developed and implemented training of women leaders as part of international assistance programmes. Zambia established special programmes at university to encourage women's participation in political life. In Finland, public authorities published sex-disaggregated data and indicators on political participation at all levels, for example: voter turnout, candidacies, representatives, committees and indirectly elected organs.

C. Gender-sensitive budgets

20. Over the past decade there has been an increased awareness of the importance of resource allocations and budgets at different levels for the promotion of gender equality. Since 2000, a growing number of countries have taken steps to develop a gender-sensitive approach to budgetary allocations. Many countries¹³ reported on initiatives and pilot projects in various ministries, covering different areas, that aimed to incorporate gender perspectives in budget planning. Some of these activities, for example in Botswana, Namibia, Norway and the United Republic of Tanzania, have been carried out in dialogue with NGOs and civil society organizations. The Ministry of Finance of Viet Nam carried out gender assessments as part of surveys and reports on public expenditure. As a result, budget allocations increased in areas such as education, health care, hunger elimination, poverty reduction and capacity-building.

21. Some countries, including Barbados, Botswana, Malaysia and Namibia, reported on activities to strengthen the capacity of Government officials to incorporate gender perspectives into the budget process. Botswana held workshops on gender-responsive budgeting for senior Government officials. In Barbados, a three-day workshop was held for budget analysts and officers of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and a number of other ministries. The Concept of Gender Policy of Kazakhstan (2003) emphasizes the importance of and need for gender sensitization, expertise and indicators in budget policy, plans and programmes.

22. Some countries developed a variety of tools and methodologies to support gender-sensitive budgeting. The United Republic of Tanzania issued guidelines and a checklist on mainstreaming gender perspectives in sectoral budgets. The National Council for Women of Egypt, in collaboration with line ministries, developed methodologies for gender auditing in national budgets. The Government of the Czech Republic requested the Ministry of Finance to develop a methodology for gender budgeting at national, regional and local levels. Mauritius set up a high-level committee on gender-responsive budgeting to develop a three-year action plan to ensure equitable budgetary distribution of resources in all ministries and departments.

23. Ireland adopted a strategy to mainstream gender perspectives into most of the expenditure of 50 billion euros (€) under the National Development Plan 2000-2006. In Norway, the Government budget proposed to parliament demonstrated increased efforts to integrate gender perspectives into budget considerations — the number of ministries contributing to the report had increased from 8 to nearly all 17 ministries in 2003-2004. Sweden reported that gender mainstreaming, as part of the budget process, had become an integral part of the Government's regular work. In 2004, a Joint Nordic Council of Ministers project on gender-sensitive budgeting was launched and the Council of Europe has organized several activities on the same subject.

24. The National Institute for Women of Honduras carried out a survey on the costs of violence against women and the implication on the national budget.

D. Institutional mechanisms

1. Sex disaggregated data and indicators

25. In acknowledging the need for reliable data and information for gender mainstreaming, particularly to effectively carry out gender analysis, a number of Governments¹⁴ provided examples of efforts taken to improve data collection and development of gender-specific indicators.

26. The Central Bureau of Statistics of Nepal successfully incorporated gender perspectives into its 2002 census, a three-year exercise that had required sensitization of Bureau officials and district census officials and enumerators. The National Institute of Women in Costa Rica worked in cooperation with the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses in developing a pilot study on women's use of time in the domestic environment.

27. Several countries made efforts to improve data collection in specific areas, such as employment, health, agriculture and migration. Bulgaria launched a project entitled "Development of a system of gender-mainstreaming indicators for assessing the quality and efficiency of labour market measures". Nicaragua developed an information system for the agricultural sector that provides data by sex. The National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia collected and analysed data on migration and displacement. The Government of Tonga collected data disaggregated by sex in a number of areas, including on employment by industry group and occupation, holders of bank loans and causes of death.

28. Data on employment discrimination by sex was collected by the Ministry of Justice in Poland. The National Commission on the Role of Philippine Women, in

collaboration with the National Statistics Office, conducted a survey on the demographics and living conditions of women workers in one export processing zone. The National Sample Survey of India on employment and unemployment (1999-2000) yielded new data on the number and situations of homeworkers, a majority of whom were women. Censuses carried out in Germany and Nepal generated gender-specific information on enterprise start-ups and ownership of resources, such as land, livestock and houses. Some countries, for example Kenya and the Republic of Korea, reported on efforts to quantify women's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP). Time-use surveys had been conducted in several countries,¹⁵ *inter alia*, to document time spent by women and men in paid and unpaid labour.

29. Some countries created databases with data disaggregated by sex to monitor and evaluate progress in areas such as health and the labour market. Malaysia developed a prototype sex-disaggregated database information system, which will be expanded in cooperation with line ministries and the Department of Statistics. Egypt created a database for the generation, dissemination and updating of gender statistics and indicators.

30. A number of countries prepared statistical publications and training manuals on gender statistics. The publication "Producing gender perspective statistics: administration, measures to prepare and institutionalize guidelines for gender perspective policymaking in Government offices", prepared by the Ministry of Gender Equality of the Republic of Korea, was disseminated to relevant organizations to foster gender-sensitive policymaking.

2. Capacity-building

31. Many responses, including those from the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Dominica, Honduras, Indonesia, Latvia, Malawi, Namibia, Qatar, Switzerland, Thailand and Viet Nam, suggested that the concept of mainstreaming was still not well understood and that efforts are needed to highlight the advantages and contributions of the strategy and develop capacity to implement it. Several countries¹⁶ noted the need for capacity-building for decision makers, planners and implementers in all sectors. Viet Nam, Uruguay and Qatar mentioned the lack of continuity in gender-mainstreaming capacity and commitment related to staff turnover or change of government. Several Member States mentioned the need for continuous training and follow-up and improved coordination and collaboration.¹⁷

32. Countries from all regions¹⁸ reported a variety of gender-mainstreaming capacity-building activities, including workshops, training programmes, round-table discussions and conferences. Target groups included Government leaders, policymakers, civil servants, members of Administrations, ministerial staff, legislators and members of the judiciary. Some countries set up special mechanisms, such as gender-training resource groups, to provide capacity-building on a systematic basis. Nepal set up a gender unit in the administrative staff college.

33. Barbados implemented a training programme on gender analysis and planning for gender focal points in Government ministries and departments. Uganda made efforts to strengthen the capacity of officials to carry out gender analysis of programmes, planning and budgets. Austria initiated a quality assurance project for gender training in 2003. Latvia developed a training programme for civil servants on gender equality and plans to make the course obligatory. The Government of

Estonia carried out a project on "Development of administrative capacity of national authorities in the field of gender mainstreaming" in the framework of the Poland-Hungary Aid for the Reconstruction of the Economy programme of the European Union. Since 2005, all ministries in Denmark should develop a plan on building competencies on gender mainstreaming within their respective areas.

34. Some countries reported that targeted training programmes on gender mainstreaming for specific sectors have been developed and implemented. In India, gender-sensitization programmes were offered to law enforcement agencies, medical officers and census enumerators. In Malawi, over 3,000 Army Officers were trained in gender and development issues and a team of trainers in gender and HIV/AIDS programmes was created. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia implemented a project on capacity-building for gender-mainstreaming analysis of development practitioners at the national and local level in 2001-2002. The Presidential Council for Equity of Women in Colombia conducted training workshops for staff of ministries, including those working in the fields of energy, mining, justice, agriculture, social protection, statistics and the family.

35. A number of countries reported on gender training in the education sector. For instance, about 350 preschool, elementary and secondary teachers participated in a gender-sensitization programme in Greece. Luxembourg introduced "gender pedagogy" to implement a non-discriminatory education and training system. Cameroon trained more than 600 community leaders to help mobilize society in favour of sending girls to school.

3. Methodologies and tools

36. A number of countries¹⁹ reported on the development of gender impact assessment tools in different sectors, such as health, education and agriculture. The United Kingdom reported that a gender impact assessment handbook had been prepared in Northern Ireland to assist departments to develop action plans and address gender inequalities within their areas of responsibility. Australia developed and tested a gender impact assessment tool based on international good practice, with a view to extending gender analysis in all policymaking activities throughout its Government.

37. A broad range of other tools such as guidelines, checklists, handbooks and manuals was developed to enhance gender mainstreaming efforts across all regions.²⁰ Sweden produced a manual entitled "Gender-classified statistics — a necessary means for gender equality analysis" for civil servants. Norway introduced a tool, called the "Gender Equality Barometer", which measures achievements in gender representation and access to resources over a broad spectrum of society and identifies good practice examples.

4. Human and financial resources

38. Many countries acknowledged that specialist technical resources, or staff with recognized gender expertise, were needed both within the national machinery and within sectoral ministries and institutions. A number of countries reported a shortage of qualified staff. Belize noted that the lack of human resources impeded its national machinery's ability to train focal points in other ministries and to provide follow-up.

39. A significant number of countries²¹ established gender units and/or gender focal points in some or all line ministries and other bodies to promote and monitor gender mainstreaming in departments and agencies working on agriculture, education, health, human rights, law, finance, security, justice, police, prisons, foreign affairs and trade. Bangladesh and Zimbabwe reported that the establishment of a gender focal point system facilitated gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies. The United States established offices for women and gender issues in numerous offices and departments, including the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense and the State Department and in the field of development assistance. The Women and Children Coordination Unit of Liberia established gender desk offices in 18 line ministries to coordinate efforts in planning and budgeting processes at the sectoral level.

40. There was also an increase in the number of special offices and focal points addressing women's and gender equality in municipal, district and provincial governments.²² Viet Nam reported establishing gender focal points in 45 ministries or agencies in 61 of 64 provinces. Costa Rica created municipal commissions on the status of women and a national network of municipal women's offices. A website was set up in Austria to promote networking of officials at the federal, provincial and municipal administration levels.²³

41. Several countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lithuania and Thailand, noted an increase in budget allocations for targeted initiatives for women and girls and gender equality. Thailand reported that budget allocations for gender training and development of tools and guidelines had increased.

42. Several countries²⁴ reported that limited financial resources were a prime obstacle to effective functioning of institutional mechanisms, which constrained their role in promoting, supporting and monitoring gender mainstreaming.

43. In a number of responses, including those from Ecuador, Kenya and the Palestinian Authority, it was noted that line ministries had no dedicated budgets for gender mainstreaming.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms

44. While some countries reported on the wide variety of monitoring mechanisms developed, others indicated that lack of monitoring and accountability measures was an obstacle to effective implementation of gender mainstreaming.

45. The most commonly reported form of monitoring was the production of regular reports, often annually, a significant number of which were submitted to national legislatures. The Government of Japan submits an annual report describing progress towards a gender-equal society, action taken in the last year and proposals for the year to come. In Brazil, gender perspectives were integrated into sector policy evaluations of the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management. The Department for Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic, set up in 1999, carries out annual evaluations of the National Action Plan for Women and the Concept of Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men, in collaboration with other line ministries. The Government of Fiji carried out a pilot project on gender auditing of Government policies to assess progress made in mainstreaming gender perspectives into the work of two ministries.

46. Some Member States set up institutions or committees to monitor progress. In 2000, Spain created a monitoring unit to build an information system capable of accurately reflecting the situation of women and the effect of policies to promote women's equality. Poland set up a permanent team of experts to monitor the national action plan. The team, which includes representatives from NGOs, established indicators for the implementation of the plan and prepared a monitoring report.

47. A few countries reported on assessment of the effectiveness of activities undertaken. The Swedish Government set up a commission of inquiry in February 2004 to evaluate the goals, direction, organization and effectiveness of the gender equality policy. In Kyrgyzstan, a gender audit of the activities of all structural subdivisions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was carried out in 2003. In the Netherlands, an independent external auditing committee was set up in 2004 to assess the effectiveness of the country's gender equality policy and the quality of results achieved. In Mexico, an analysis of progress in gender mainstreaming was carried out in 30 federal civil service bodies. As a result, Government agencies were classified in three categories: (a) advanced (encompassing 26.7 per cent of all bodies); (b) moderately advanced (40 per cent); and (c) starting the process (33.3 per cent).

48. Lack of or insufficient data disaggregated by sex and age was mentioned as an obstacle to monitoring progress in gender mainstreaming. Kenya noted that it is difficult to measure the level of implementation without established monitoring and evaluation systems, including sufficient information and data.

49. Some efforts have been made to develop accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming but little real progress was reported in this area. In Malta, accountability for gender mainstreaming is ensured through the performance management contract of senior officials in the public service and the performance management programme of other officers. In the Philippines, Government agencies are held accountable for the promotion of gender equality through the gender and development budget policy, which requires them to prepare annual gender and development plans and budgets together with their regular agency plans and budgets.

6. Role of national mechanisms

50. Several countries²⁵ noted the important role that national machineries play in promoting, supporting and monitoring gender mainstreaming in line ministries and other bodies at national level. The national policy framework on women's empowerment and gender equality of South Africa outlines the role of the national machinery and all other Government structures in advancing the national gender programme. The national focal point on women in Brunei Darussalam is responsible for undertaking and promoting research, providing training and a forum for exchange of ideas and discussion, creating awareness and coordinating projects.

51. An increasing number of countries, for example Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Chile, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Malta and Turkey, established inter-ministerial working groups or committees for gender mainstreaming to improve coordination. The Ministry of State of Turkey, under which the General Directorate on the Status of Women functions, established a communication network with all other related ministries to ensure that its policy proposals materialized into concrete proposals.

52. A number of countries indicated that they had established partnerships with NGOs and other bodies to work on gender mainstreaming. In Germany, the Gender Competence Centre at Humboldt University in Berlin provided advice and support to the federal ministries to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. Bolivia, France and Uruguay established agreements and letters of intent among line ministries, local government, the private sector or NGOs. The Dutch expertise centre for gender and ethnicity at the e-quality knowledge centre supported gender mainstreaming with expertise, theme studies, instruments and the distribution of good practices.

53. Many countries²⁶ specifically mentioned NGO involvement in public policy formulation and national strategy development. NGOs have assisted the implementation of national plans in several countries, including in Bulgaria, Denmark, Cuba, China, El Salvador and the United Kingdom. NGOs have also promoted public awareness by establishing regional branches for outreach; assisting in gender training for experts and staff of Government and non-governmental entities; and providing advisory services.

54. In Bangladesh, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs worked closely with NGOs and women's organizations and included representatives of civil society in all its high-level policymaking committees. El Salvador's national policy on women called for coordination among official bodies, NGOs and civil society groups. From 2000 to 2004, the Government of Lithuania worked with NGOs in the implementation of gender-sensitive programmes with a view to facilitating progress in specific areas requiring inter-institutional cooperation, such as small and medium enterprises development, trafficking, prostitution, HIV/AIDS, drug control and prevention and domestic violence. The Samoa Association for Women Graduates hosted a conference of the Pacific Graduate Women's Network in September 2005, which focused on women's access to information and communication technology for their enhanced involvement and participation in politics.

55. Some Member States reported partnerships with parliamentarians. Some countries established formal legislative committees to review and propose legislation. Latvia established a special subcommittee to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming legislation.

56. Several Member States reported on linkages with men's organizations and discussions on gender issues from the perspective of men. Barbados supported the men's educational support association and promoted discussion on the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. Jordan enlisted male parliamentarians as partners in the debate over women's human rights.

III. Activities of entities of the United Nations system to support national level implementation of gender mainstreaming

57. Entities of the United Nations system supported national implementation of gender mainstreaming through projects, programmes and other activities. Several United Nations entities, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),

provided assistance to Governments in their efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into national development frameworks, such as poverty reduction strategies, sector reforms and sector-wide approach initiatives. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) carried out a pilot project in the Syrian Arab Republic on gender mapping. The International Labour Office (ILO) conducted gender audits for its constituents for the first time in 2004.

58. Entities such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNFPA and WFP assisted countries in developing gender-sensitive policies and action plans, including on population and development, agriculture and rural development planning and food security. UNFPA supported Indonesia in reviewing and strengthening gender perspectives in its family law and development and population policy. WFP contributed to the integration of gender perspectives into the recent food security and nutrition assessment in Darfur. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided technical inputs to facilitate the incorporation of gender perspectives in the drafting of new constitutions and legislation and cooperated with national and international partners to integrate gender perspectives into electoral processes.

59. United Nations entities organized meetings, workshops and seminars to promote and develop capacity for gender mainstreaming at the national level. The twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi from 21 to 25 February 2005, adopted a decision on gender mainstreaming in environmental policies and programmes.²⁷ The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Europe organized two regional symposiums in Bangkok (2002) and in Geneva (2004), which provided opportunities for Member States to exchange experiences and good practice examples in gender mainstreaming. In October 2005, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), in cooperation with the Government of Panama and the Inter-American Development Bank, organized one workshop and one seminar on intellectual property, gender and the protection of traditional cultural expressions and traditional knowledge in order to address the important role of indigenous women.

60. Several entities of the United Nations have disseminated findings of their research in different sector areas to support gender mainstreaming at the national level. UNEP reported on gender mainstreaming in environmental assessment and early warning. FAO has taken the lead in documenting the impact of HIV/AIDS on agriculture and agricultural workers, in particular women, and has provided policy advice to its Member States on how to mitigate the negative impacts on agriculture and food security.

61. Several entities, such as FAO, UNAIDS, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNFPA, UNIFEM and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, assisted Member States in the collection, effective use and dissemination of data and indicators disaggregated by sex. FAO assisted several Member States in the collection and retabulation of sex-disaggregated data to support informed planning and formulation of policies, programmes and projects in the agricultural sector and trained national

agricultural statisticians in the collection of such data. More than one third of UNDP country offices supported the collection of data disaggregated by sex, a major contribution to the development of a gender-responsive common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) process, poverty reduction strategy papers, Millennium Development Goal reports and national human development reports.

62. The Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs worked on reviewing and updating the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*²⁸ in preparation for the 2010 Census World Programme, with a view to making the collection, production and dissemination of national census data more gender sensitive. Specific areas of attention included internal and international migration, education, families, employment, ethnicity, human functioning and disability and housing. The Statistics Division also prepared a publication entitled *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work*²⁹ for use by Member States, which includes a trial International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work. UNIFEM supported efforts to build sustainable skills and commitments to develop and use sex-disaggregated databases in several countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.

63. UNFPA supported institutional capacity-building for gender mainstreaming in a number of countries in the Arab States region, such as Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Oman, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan and Yemen. Activities included the development of gender strategies, gender audit and budget methodologies, mainstreaming gender in planning processes and reviewing legislation. ESCAP offered a gender-sensitive capacity-building programme on multimodal transport. FAO strengthened the capacity of more than 4,000 development specialists, in over 80 countries, to integrate socio-economic and gender issues in development policies, programmes and projects. UNAIDS, with the All China Women's Federation in Guangdong Province, supported the strengthening of the leadership of both the Party and the Government in addressing HIV/AIDS from a gender perspective.

64. The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women disseminated information, tools and good practices on gender mainstreaming to Member States through its gender-mainstreaming database, which includes an extensive collection of resources on gender mainstreaming produced by different organizations, and sections on lessons learned and good practices. As an added feature, the database also contains a glossary of the terminology most commonly used in gender mainstreaming in order to facilitate conceptual clarity and common understanding.

65. As part of their strategies to promote gender mainstreaming at the national level, some entities carried out advocacy campaigns and established networks. In 2002, UNESCO facilitated the establishment of the regional gender in education network in Asia, in 15 countries, which aims to promote gender equality in education in terms of access, retention, performance and self-realization through developing gender responsive education policies and challenging societal gender stereotypes. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) carried out gender-sensitization campaigns with the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and

Maritime Transport; the Nautical Training School of Cape Verde; the Marine Training School of Malawi; and the Maritime Training College of Veracruz, Mexico. A regional sensitization seminar held in Samoa in 2004 resulted in the creation of the Pacific Women in Maritime Association (WIMA) in February 2005, which aims to promote active participation of women in the maritime sector of the Pacific Island countries.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

66. An increasing number of Member States utilize gender mainstreaming and specific interventions to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Policy frameworks for gender mainstreaming have improved at national level. Action plans, in some instances including time-bound goals and targets, are also in place in an increasing number of countries. Many countries, in further refining their policies on gender mainstreaming, have provided specific guidance on implementation. In addition to establishing general policies on gender mainstreaming, a number of countries have developed specific policies and action plans on mainstreaming gender perspectives into different sector areas. There has also been considerable development of methodologies, including for capacity-building, and tools, such as manuals and guidelines, to support implementation of these policies and action plans.

67. In addition, countries have made considerable efforts to incorporate gender perspectives into existing sector policies and strategies and programmes. Initiatives have been taken in a wide range of sector areas. Good practice examples were identified in relation to the items under consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session.

68. Good practice examples were also provided on institutional development for gender mainstreaming. The development of action plans with concrete, measurable targets has proven particularly effective. Gender analysis of national budgets has also emerged as an important means of ensuring that resource allocations match policy commitments on gender mainstreaming.

69. Nevertheless, a significant gap between policy and practice, however, remains. Effective gender mainstreaming requires strong political commitment in the form of clear mandates, regular monitoring and enforcement of accountability mechanisms. Insufficient allocation of specific resources, both gender specialists and financial resources, for gender mainstreaming has hindered effective implementation.

70. Gaps which need to be addressed on a priority basis include inadequate understanding of the concept and lack of practical implementation strategies and skills. While the development of many innovative methodologies and tools can be seen as a positive development, they are not being utilized as systematically as required for effective implementation. Ensuring broader dissemination and more effective use of existing methodologies and tools must be a priority.

71. Critical challenges remain to the development of appropriate capacity-development programmes to ensure the systematic use of gender analysis and the establishment of monitoring and reporting procedures. Few countries

reported on successful establishment of accountability mechanisms. Efforts to collect, compile and disseminate sex-disaggregated data for use in monitoring and reporting on gender mainstreaming should be strengthened.

72. The catalytic role of national mechanisms for women, including ministries, gender equality commissions and committees and parliamentary bodies, in supporting gender mainstreaming should be strengthened. The mandates, resources, management support and access to decision-making of focal points in line ministries should be enhanced and coordination between line ministries increased. Interaction with gender specialists in other bodies at national level, such as NGOs, women's groups and networks and academia, and networking and sharing of good practice within and across regions, could support implementation of gender mainstreaming at national level.

73. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to encourage Governments, with support of the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders to:

- (a) Ensure that actions plans on gender mainstreaming include concrete goals, targets and indicators and clearly allocated responsibilities;
- (b) Fully incorporate gender perspectives in budget processes;
- (c) Ensure use of gender analysis and consultation with women in critical strategy development and reporting processes, including in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategies;
- (d) Develop/strengthen and institutionalize the use of gender analysis, gender impact assessment and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation procedures for all policy areas;
- (e) Strengthen accountability systems for gender mainstreaming in all government bodies;
- (f) Systematically document and disseminate lessons learned and good practice;
- (g) Develop/strengthen the roles of national mechanisms, such as women's ministries, gender equality committees and commissions and parliaments in promoting, supporting and monitoring gender mainstreaming and increase collaboration with non-governmental organizations and civil society.

74. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to enhance its catalytic role on gender mainstreaming at national level by requesting the Secretary-General, in a report on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session to the fifty-first session of the Commission, to provide an assessment of progress on gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices, and to recommend further measures to enhance implementation, bearing in mind the thematic issue(s) under consideration by the Commission, as outlined in its multi-year programme of work.

Notes

- ¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 1 (E/2001/99), resolution 2001/4, para. 4.*
- ² See E/CN.6/2005/2, in the preparation of which, responses to the questionnaire on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) were received from 140 countries.
- ³ See DAW/2005/011. Responses were received from Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Honduras, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, Tonga, Turkey and Uruguay.
- ⁴ Inputs were received from the Population and Statistics Divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, FAO, ILO, IMO, OCHA, OSSA, UNAIDS, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNRISD, UNRWA, WFP and WIPO.
- ⁵ For example: Austria, Bolivia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Norway and Slovenia.
- ⁶ For example: Andorra, Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gambia, Honduras, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom.
- ⁷ For example: Austria, Belgium, Finland, Ireland and the United Kingdom.
- ⁸ For example: Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Finland, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, Nepal, Norway, Peru and Zambia.
- ⁹ See <http://www.gem-set.org>.
- ¹⁰ For example: Argentina, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Greece, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Spain and Sweden.
- ¹¹ For example: Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Namibia, Nicaragua, Norway, New Zealand, Slovenia and the Syrian Arab Republic.
- ¹² For example: Belgium, Belize, Chile, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan and Oman.
- ¹³ For example: Australia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Chile, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Morocco, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam.
- ¹⁴ For example: Algeria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Honduras, India, Ireland, Malta, Nepal, Nicaragua, Norway, the Palestinian Authority, Panama, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam and the United Kingdom.
- ¹⁵ For example: Canada, Finland, India, Italy, Mexico, Norway, New Zealand and Slovenia.
- ¹⁶ For example: Colombia, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Malawi, Switzerland and Uganda.
- ¹⁷ For example: the Central African Republic, Kenya, Maldives and Qatar.
- ¹⁸ For example: Austria, Barbados, Belize, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Portugal, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uganda and Viet Nam.
- ¹⁹ For example: Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom.

- ²⁰ For example: Austria, Belgium, Belize, Ethiopia, Germany, Malawi, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Suriname, Sweden and Switzerland.
- ²¹ For example: Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Finland, Guinea, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Norway, Seychelles, Suriname, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Panama, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.
- ²² For example: Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Paraguay and Sweden.
- ²³ See <http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at>.
- ²⁴ For example: Belize, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Maldives, Nepal, Peru and Suriname.
- ²⁵ For example: Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Guatemala, New Zealand, Norway, the Palestinian Authority, Singapore, Seychelles, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- ²⁶ For example: Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, Jordan and Kyrgyzstan.
- ²⁷ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/60/25)*, annex.
- ²⁸ *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XVII.8).
- ²⁹ *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XVII.7).